

Pentecostals and politics in Ghana's Fourth Republic: From enclave to engagement

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Pentecostals and politics in Ghana's Fourth Republic: From enclave to engagement

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Abstract:

Using a case study of six Pentecostal ministries, spanning four strands of Pentecostalism in Ghana, this study examines Pentecostals' engagement with politics during the Fourth Republican era of Ghana's political history (1993-present). The aim is to discern whether there is a new and distinctive Pentecostal political engagement different from that of Historic Mission Churches, and from its own past, and evaluate its significance. To address this, three practical areas of Pentecostal participation in politics are examined: (1) democracy; (2) political economy; and, (3) prophetic politics. The argument is that Pentecostals in Ghana have transitioned from an 'enclave' community to one of sustained political engagement. The study demonstrates that this transition entails both continuities and discontinuities in Pentecostal political engagement. The new elements that are highlighted are the development of a

distinctive prophetic politics focussed on ‘divine prediction,’ which forecasts political happenings, and more active and unique ways of participating in Ghana’s democracy and economy that closely reference the democratic and national economic goals. The study evidences the academic value in widening studies on Pentecostal political engagement beyond prosperity teachings and enchanted world views to include Pentecostal practice, alongside Pentecostal theologies. The thesis contributes to advancing knowledge specifically in the areas of Pentecostals and politics, and Christianity and politics in Ghana, and West Africa more generally.

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